

Annual Corporate Evaluation Report

2007

**For presentation to the Board of Governors
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**Evaluation Unit
International Development Research Centre**

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1 Introduction

This year's federal budget calls for increasing effectiveness, efficiency and accountability in development assistance. The government is concerned that Canadians receive value for money in development assistance spending and wants to ensure that the evaluation of that spending provides valid assessment of the results being achieved. A central concern noted in the budget is with the independence of evaluation to ensure it is not self-serving and political in nature. The Centre maintains an evaluation system that includes elements of independence as well as a wide coverage of IDRC's spending. This system ensures that we can provide high quality evaluation results that demonstrate IDRC's value. This report to IDRC Governors is an important element of the independent evaluation function at the Centre, as it represents an opportunity for the Evaluation Unit to report directly to the Centre's governing body. At the same time, this report includes a response from Centre management on issues it intends to address as a result of evaluations undertaken over the past year. Section 2 reports on developments in the Centre's evaluation system this year and present a summary for the benefit of Governors (Annex 2). Because of the decentralized nature of evaluation at the Centre, oversight of the system is a central responsibility of the Unit.

A second important influence in the current development evaluation environment relates to the nature of high quality evaluation. Major contributions to this debate have been made by the Center for Global Development, the Poverty Action Lab at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), the American Evaluation Association and more recently at the conference of the African Evaluation Association in Niamey, Niger last January. The debate has been polarized around the place of the experimental method in evaluation, with one view holding that the experimental method, (more specifically randomized control trials) are the gold standard to which all evaluation should strive and the other view holding that there is no gold standard *per se* and that experimental design is highly limiting. The Centre has always taken a pragmatic view: that while the Centre views the experimental and quasi-experimental methods as an important element in any evaluation (or research) system, this is only one approach among many and is only suitable for evaluating a small percentage of

**Table 1:
Evaluation at a Glance**

The Evaluation Unit is staffed by 4.5 professionals and manages a program budget of \$1.2 million (2006-07 & 2007-08). In addition the Unit has a budget of \$100K toward evaluation dissemination and use & evaluation capacity building within the Centre.

In addition to these evaluation resources, in IDRC's decentralized evaluation system programs fund their own evaluation activities and Programs Branch funds external program reviews. The Evaluation Plan for 07-08 (Annex 3) notes evaluations planned for this year with estimated budgets. The \$775K noted is incomplete as seven evaluations, including PI External reviews, are not yet budgeted.

With an estimate of expenses for these activities, the Centre will fall within a reasonable range for evaluation expenditures, of 3-5% of program funds.

development research. The key is to determine the context in which evaluation is taking place, what is being evaluated and for what purpose, in order to select the most appropriate method for evaluation. This means that the Centre makes use of multiple methods and approaches depending on the purpose to be served and the context within which evaluation is taking place. This is an important debate that in the long run will contribute to improving the overall quality of evaluation. The Centre's engagement with the debate will be focused on maintaining the logic of multiple methods and the continuing recognition that there are no silver bullets in development research or its evaluation.

The purpose of the Annual Corporate Evaluation (ACE) report is to summarize for Governors the highlights of evaluation at the Centre each year. The ACE report illustrates that our efforts go beyond conducting evaluations, to include fostering a culture of evaluative thinking both in the Centre and with the Centre's partners and reinforcing effective tools and methods for the evaluation of development research. The cultivation of evaluative thinking¹ has been achieved through capacity building, providing support to evaluations, as well as events based on evaluation that encourage reflection on the Centre's progress. ACE 2007 highlights some of the key lessons from the year, presents progress on the development of the evaluation system at the Centre, and tracks the processes of evaluative thinking in the Centre and with our partners. Finally, ACE 2007 reflects the Centre's decentralized, use-oriented approach to evaluation. This is important because it reflects not only uptake and use of evaluation by programs as well as partners, but also the increasing integration of evaluation into programming design.

In June 2005, Governors approved the *Evaluation Strategy 2005-2010*. The strategy established four focus areas for the Unit: strategic evaluations; capacity development; tools and methods development and use; and organizational learning processes. This introduction highlights some of the achievements in this second year of implementation based on these four focal areas.

Strategic Evaluations

This year saw the completion of Phase III, and significant progress in Phase IV, of the capacity development evaluation. Phase III of the study looked at a sample of projects and resulted in a capacity development typology for IDRC (See Evaluation Highlight 13 in section 4.5 of this report). The lack of a typology has hampered the assessment of achievements in capacity building. The study has presented a typology that is strategic rather than a recipe that would limit: a typology that recognizes the range of capacity building work inherent in research for development. Phase IV will be based on six (6) case studies that will test and refine the typology. The case studies will examine both the *processes* and the *results* of building capacity to do research with respect to building the capacity of organizations where the research is conducted. They will cover the major types of organizations with which the Centre works and represent a sample of the top

¹ Evaluative thinking is defined as being clear and specific about what results are sought and what means are used to achieve them.

dollar recipients of IDRC funding over the past decade, ensuring a relatively wide coverage with a small number of cases. The sample includes an international NGO, a research centre that is part of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, a research consortium, two universities and a government ministry. This focus reinforces the efforts the Centre is making to address strengthening organizational capacity as a key part of building the capacity for research in the South. The end goal is not to measure partners' performance *per se*; rather, it is to explore what links can be made between partners' performance and the level/type of capacity development support received from IDRC. The case studies will be completed in November/December of this year and will be shared with the Centre and the development research and evaluation community. We will report on them to you next year.

As has been reported to Governors in the past two ACE reports, an evaluation of IDRC-supported research networks was carried out. The focus of the evaluation was to understand dimensions of the sustainability, intended results, and coordination of research networks. To this end, a decade's worth of IDRC-documentation was reviewed and network coordinators were surveyed as input into analyses by external experts on the focus topics. The knowledge from the strategic evaluation and the Centre as a whole has been consolidated into a print package as well as a website [http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-65285-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html] for dissemination inside and outside the Centre. This consolidation of IDRC's knowledge will ensure the Centre's experience with networks is available to improve the performance of networks in future as well as to demonstrate expertise with this modality. The website is the first time the Centre has consolidated in one place its rich experience with networks.

Building Capacity for Evaluation

Building capacity evaluation and evaluative thinking is central to the mandate of the Evaluation Unit. The Unit has a dual mandate in this regard: building capacity in evaluation and evaluative thinking both within the Centre and with partners in the field.

Evaluation Unit staff and other Centre staff hosted evaluation planning and design workshops with Centre projects in all regions. The Unit actively encourages the involvement of program officers and other Centre staff in evaluation workshops with partners in order to support the ongoing integration of evaluation into program design and delivery.

With the support of OtherWISE, a South African research and evaluation organization, the Unit hosted an African Outcome Mapping (OM) Users Workshop in Niamey, Niger. This workshop provided an open, collegial forum for knowledge sharing to improve and spread the practice of OM in Africa. The workshop brought together approximately 50 African OM users, 30 of whom IDRC supported to participate in the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) Conference that directly followed the workshop. The Unit also supported training workshops on organizational assessment at AfrEA (in both English and French) and participated actively in several conference sessions.

In Ottawa, two workshops on organizational assessment were delivered to Centre staff; plans are underway to deliver similar workshops in the regions. Evaluation capacity for Centre staff was further reinforced through provision of eight awards to staff to participate in evaluation training events.

Box 1: Evaluation Scholarships

The *IDRC Evaluation Research Awards* are intended to promote the growth of Canadian and developing country capacity in evaluation and to better the theory and practice of evaluation. Three awards were offered this year:

Patricia Derbyship, *An Analysis of the Introduction of Student-led Peace Circle and Youth Leadership Activities in Western Sri Lanka: The Utility & Adoption of Relationship Mapping as a Conflict Transformation Device*, Royal Roads University;

Blane Harvey, *Participatory Evaluation of Capacity Building for Sustainable Livelihoods: Securing Livelihood and Reducing Poverty through Community Empowerment (Senegal)*, McGill University; and

Sandra Znajda, *Exploring Qualitative Approaches to Evaluation: Multiple Perspectives of the Influence of Integrated Conservation/Development Projects*, (Nicaragua), Dalhousie University.

Organizational Learning

Organizational learning is an important element of the use of evaluation at IDRC. Evaluations should contribute to improving what we do and how we work: imparting evaluation knowledge and sharing findings is an important part of the Unit's strategy. As highlighted in Section 2 of this report, the rolling Project Completion Reports (rPCRs) are not only being completed in a timely fashion, they are also being actively used to learn from projects. While in the past the Unit's focus has been on supporting the implementation process, this year saw a shift towards analysis and use of the rPCRs, not only in the Evaluation Unit but across the Centre (see, for example, reports from the Directors of Programming Areas this year).

This year marked the Third Annual Learning Forum (ALF) on which governors received a brief written report at the March Board meeting. ALF is jointly planned by Programs Branch, the Policy and Planning Group, and the Evaluation Unit. The Forum is not intended as a decision forum but as a space for reflection and learning on a topic of importance to the Centre. It relies on data from rPCRs for background material and includes other evaluative material on the chosen topic. The focus of ALF 2007 was on a topic of growing interest and importance in the Centre, **strengthening organizational capacity**, and played an important role in stimulating interest, discussion and debate in the Centre on the topic. This report includes the rPCR analysis developed in preparation for the ALF (see section 4.5). A range of other materials on the topic was prepared as background material for staff to enhance their participation in ALF 2007. As in previous

years the ALF was rated highly by staff (overall 8.8/10) and was felt to contribute to learning on the topic. The ALF 2007 material remains available on the [ALF website \(www.idrc.ca/alf\)](http://www.idrc.ca/alf).

Tools and Methods

New tools and methods work was kept to a minimum this year. The focus was primarily on consolidation and use of evaluation this year (see “capacity building” above). The Outcome Mapping “Virtual Learning Community” demonstrates the continued use and uptake of Outcome Mapping (see Box 2). This year the learning community published a review of content of the discussions during the first year, which is expected to expand the reach of OM (see Box 3). This year also saw expanded reach of organizational assessment across the Centre.

Overview of the Structure of ACE 2007

The report uses examples and illustrations from projects to demonstrate the key findings and issues that have emerged over the year. As in ACE reports over the past two years, the report includes evaluation materials used to present evaluation findings to the Centre and to the public. **Section 2** of this report presents the reporting on rolling Project Completion Report trends as well as Corporate Performance. Moreover, a key challenge for the Centre is how to report on performance at the corporate level given the highly diversified nature of its activities. Programs do not “add up” to a singular whole, so the focus at the corporate level has been on its performance in managing the enabling conditions to ensure strong program delivery across the Centre. Two issues emerged in the analysis: first, the need to improve monitoring to ensure data availability both for assessment of projects by programs and for evaluation purposes; and second, the need to improve the definition of objectives. This report is in discussion with senior management and will be presented to Governors at the October 2007 meeting.

Section 3 presents two regular features of this report to Governors: a review of evaluation quality and a profile of Centre evaluators. Uptake and use of evaluation depend first and foremost on high quality evaluations. If studies are not rigorous and carefully constructed, the use of findings is compromised and indeed use of findings can be negative rather than positive. Evaluation quality continues to be good, more or less consistent with last year, and significantly higher than in the period of the last CS+PF. The Unit also tracks the profile of evaluators, both to help us foster the participation of evaluators from the South in the Centre’s evaluation work and to re-balance the gender profile of evaluators in a largely male profession. For the third year in a row, more than half the evaluators used by the Centre came from the South, demonstrating solid progress on this dimension. At the same time, the profile notes a limited number of female evaluators – 16% compared to a usual percentage of 35-45% over the past few years. This finding merits attention to assess whether it is a one-year variation or a trend.

Section 4 presents examples of learning from evaluation. The first section highlights an example of the mutual learning between the Centre and our partner CIRMA (Centro de

Investigaciones Regionales de Meso América). This section also highlights the Unit's efforts in evaluation capacity development, examples of analyses and use of rPCRs, centre-wide capacity development and an example of IDRC's influence in evaluation work.

Section 5 presents a brief summary of the main points of the report.

The **Annexes** include summaries of evaluation planning for the next year at the Centre as well as an overview of the evaluation system, a listing of evaluation reports received this year, the quality assessment guide, a list of Evaluation "Highlights" and "Guidelines" that are provided to Centre staff to assist them in their evaluation efforts and, finally, the management response to this report.

Box 2: What is Outcome Mapping?

Outcome mapping is a planning, monitoring and evaluation framework that was developed by the Evaluation Unit and a group of program partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America, in response to fundamental challenges encountered by IDRC program staff in assessing and reporting on development impacts. The originality of the methodology is its shift away from assessing the products of a program (e.g., policy relevance, poverty alleviation, reduced conflict) to a focus on changes in behaviours, relationships, actions, and/or activities of the people and organizations with whom a development program works directly. *Outcome Mapping: Building Learning and Reflection into Development Program*, by Sarah Earl, Fred Carden, and Terry Smutylo was published in English in 2001 and has subsequently been published in French, Spanish, Thai and Portuguese. For more information, please go to www.idrc.ca/evaluation.

2 The Evaluation System

The Evaluation Unit is responsible for maintaining the Centre's evaluation system. Annex 2, 'IDRC's Approach to Evaluation' summarizes the Centre's evaluation and results reporting system. In this year's report, we highlight reporting completion rates of the rolling Project Completion Reports (rPCR) and corporate performance. The Centre's Evaluation Plan for 2007-2008 is included in Annex 3. This plan includes both the work of the Evaluation Unit and the evaluation plans of each of the Centre's programs.

As noted in the introduction, the issue of high quality evaluation is a major issue in Ottawa to respond to the government's call for increased effectiveness of development assistance as well as increased efficiency and accountability. The concept of independence in evaluation is a key issue under discussion. The IDRC evaluation system maintains integrity and ensures quality through a number of mechanisms as outlined below.

First, the Evaluation Unit reports directly to the President, not through any intermediary. Second, through this report, the Unit maintains a direct line to the Board in reporting evaluation findings. Third, external review of the evaluation function provides assurance of the quality of work through periodic independent review. Fourth, the use of third party evaluators provides additional external perspectives on Centre progress. Fifth, the external program review cycle provides an independent perspective on Centre programs; and sixth, open disclosure of evaluation findings ensures transparency and the ability to challenge both findings and the Centre's response to them.

It can be argued that external evaluators are also biased and report based on agency needs (whether for a positive or a negative evaluation). While this may occur it is equally fair to say that a separate agency to evaluate in a domain can also have its own agenda and priorities, biasing its results. There is no singular answer to the development of an independent evaluation system. For this reason the final element of a high quality system is the ability to triangulate across a range of studies conducted for different purposes. Where inconsistencies emerge, we and others can explore these with a view to uncovering whether this signals a problem with data or a variation in a trend. These principles underline IDRC's evaluation system described in Annex 2.

2.1 rolling Project Completion Reports (rPCRs)

Addressing criticisms by the Office of the Auditor General on poor completion rates of Project Completion Reports (PCRs), the Centre initiated a new "rolling Project Completion Report" process in 2005. The rPCR system is based on a series of interviews at the beginning, middle and end of a project. All projects over \$150,000 are required to complete a Stage 3 interview. Stages 1, 2, and 3 interviews are completed in three strategic projects selected every year by programs. Last year, the Centre focused on successful implementation of the new system. This year, use of the data from rPCRs has been demonstrated in a number of reports, notably in the reports of Program Area Directors, in the Corporate Assessment Framework and in preparations for the Annual

Learning Forum. Some programs have also used rPCRs in team meetings and in evaluations.

In this section, we highlight the Centre's completion of rPCRs, based on the report the Unit has been making to senior management twice per year since implementation of the new project reporting system. Examples of the use of rPCR findings are provided (see Section 4, "Learning from Evaluation").

2.1.1 rPCR Completion Rates and Reporting (January 2005 - December 2006)

When senior management approved the implementation of the new rPCR process in 2004, the Evaluation Unit committed to reporting on completion rates. Since then five reports have been presented to senior management.

Each report presents the number of closed projects requiring a rPCR that closed and the number of rPCRs that were completed in the previous three quarters from the reporting date. Overall, while the number of rPCRs coming due has remained relatively stable, the number of rPCRs completed indicates a very positive trend upward.

Table 2: As reported in:	October 2005	January 2006	March 2006	July 2006	January 2007
Projects closed*	74	58	77	87	73
rPCRs completed*	62	46	86	81	95

** In the previous 3 quarters (these numbers include completion of some rPCRs from earlier quarters).*

The report also presents the total number of rPCRs that are late as of the reporting date. The most recent report presented the lowest number of late rPCRs to date, indicating the growing importance this is taking across the Centre.

Table 3: As reported in:	October 2005	January 2006	March 2006	July 2006	January 2007
Late rPCRs*	53	89	66	88	50

**rPCRs are defined as "late" when they have not been completed within 90 days of project completion.*

The rPCR process has been well integrated into the operational and reporting practices of the Centre. rPCRs are now fully recognized as an essential component of the reporting system, as both an accountability mechanism and a rich source of information on project implementation and results. Continued reporting will help ensure management of the process.

2.3 Corporate Performance Reporting

The development of a performance management framework has been a continually evolving experiment over the past four years at the Centre. The Corporate Assessment Framework (CAF) is designed to help managers make decisions that support programming efforts to achieve the IDRC mission. By monitoring corporate performance related to the Centre's strategic goals and operating principles, managers can uncover the strengths in organizational and programmatic structures and systems.

Approved by the Centre's management in the spring of 2006, the 2006 CAF process adhered to a systematic approach to collecting and presenting data to senior management for discussion and use. The seven performance areas defined by management were the critical entry points for which information was collated and coded:

- Enhancing Capacities
- Research Results for Policy and Technology Influence
- Canadian Partnership
- Donor Partnerships
- Gender Equality
- Strategic Knowledge Gathering
- Evaluative Thinking

In 2006, over 400 Centre documents were reviewed and coded for the CAF. In total, the CAF coding process produced approximately 5,000 pages of data concerning the seven performance areas

2.3.1 Next steps on corporate performance reporting

A draft report has been submitted to senior management for consideration. It was agreed that a more in-depth discussion was warranted when Regional Directors were in Ottawa in conjunction with this Board meeting before management comments on its pertinence and on use of the findings.

In the preliminary discussions, the findings were generally found to resonate, to be useful in reflecting on progress and in some cases were findings not articulated elsewhere in Centre reporting. As an accountability tool, the CAF has clear value as it presents evidence based on data on how we manage performance for effective program delivery. It has the potential to serve as a learning tool, not only through discussions at senior management, but also in the potential for contributing to change and improvement to the Centre. This report will be presented to Governors in October 2007 together with a discussion on how the CAF has been used to that point.

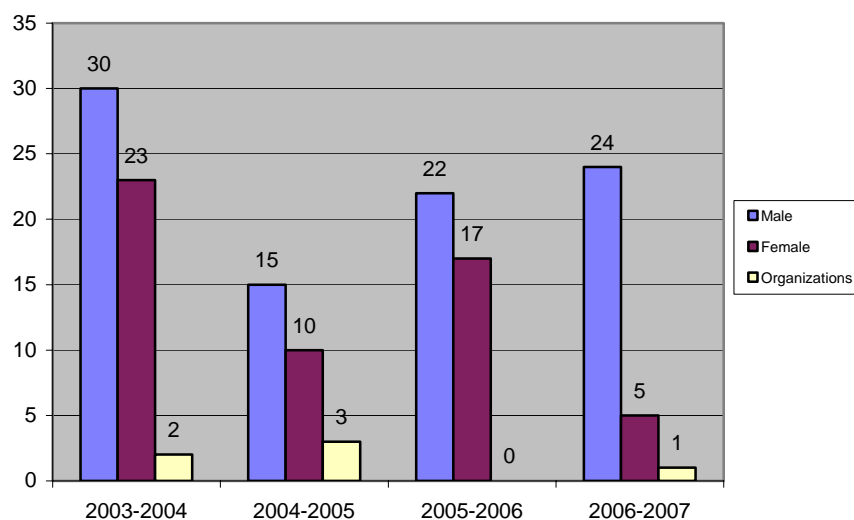
3 Overview of Evaluation in 2006-2007

The Evaluation Unit gathers data about the evaluators employed by the Centre and assesses and monitors the quality of evaluations produced. This process is undertaken as part of on-going efforts to improve the quality and utility of the Centre's evaluation work. The findings from these activities are reported here annually and are used to reflect on and improve the Centre's evaluation practice.

3.1 Profile of Evaluators

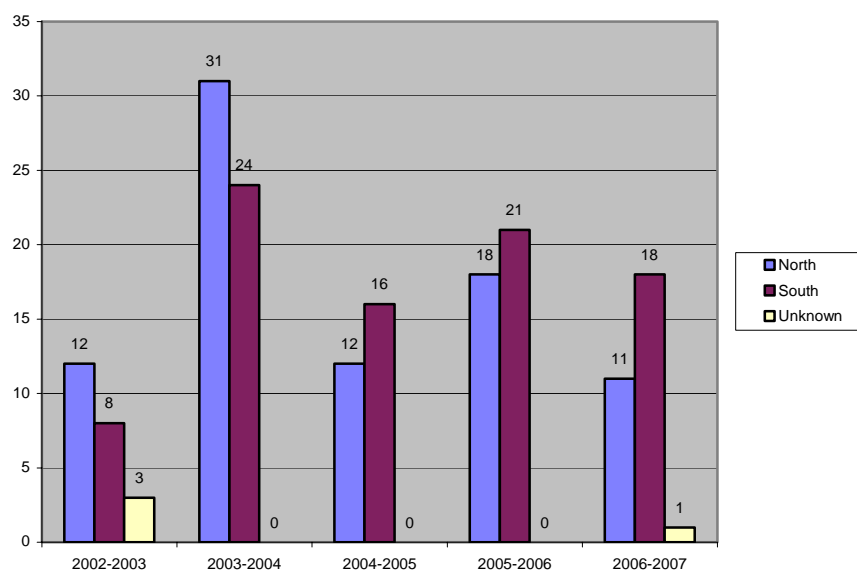
IDRC's decentralized evaluation system means that evaluators are contracted by those closest to the activity, so a profile can only emerge through regular analysis. As illustrated in Table 4, in 2006-2007 a total of 30 evaluators were represented in 18 reports received by the Evaluation Unit. This year, IDRC-hired evaluators were 80% male and 16% female, numbers that are significantly more uneven than in past years. This merits attention to assess whether it is a one year variation or a trend.

Table 4: Sex of Evaluators



One mechanism for supporting the growing evaluation profession in the South is recruiting Southern evaluators to conduct evaluations of IDRC projects and programs. It is noteworthy that for a third consecutive year, there is a higher representation of Southern over Northern evaluators hired on IDRC projects/programs (See Table 5). The Evaluation Unit will continue to build capacity with partners in the South and support the work of Southern professional evaluation associations. While the Centre

Table 5: North-South Evaluators



encourages the use of evaluators from the South, it recognizes that in many situations the use of an evaluator from the North is also appropriate.

3.2 Quality of Evaluation Reports

The Evaluation Unit assesses the quality of evaluation reports against criteria based on the program evaluation standards endorsed by international evaluation associations. These require that evaluation be utility-focused, feasibility-conscious, accuracy-based, and propriety-oriented (See Annex 5 for further details on how the Unit assesses these areas of quality). This section reports on the quality of the project/program evaluations received by the Unit.

Table 6: Quality of Evaluation Reports			
Aspect of Quality	2006-2007	2005-2006	2002-2005 CSPF III
OVERALL	69 %	70 %	61 %
Utility	70 %	78 %	62 %
Feasibility	80 %	78 %	65 %
Accuracy	88 %	89 %	75 %
Propriety	39 %	35 %	41 %

The overall quality profile of the evaluation reports that were assessed this year is presented in Table 6 and represents findings for the second year of the new CS+PF. It demonstrates some areas of improvements, but suggests the need for an ongoing campaign to improve evaluation quality. On average this year's evaluation reports scored positively on 69% of all indicators of

quality. The quality of evaluation reports was uneven across each of the four separate dimensions of quality (utility, feasibility, accuracy, and propriety).

Evaluation reports were **accurate**: they presented conclusions and recommendations that were supported by evidence, and which had been derived through the application of appropriate and solid research methods. For example, the evaluation report *IDRC at the 11th World Congress on Public Health/8th Brazilian Congress on Collective Health, August 21st to 25th, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil* by Lucy Gray-Donald, demonstrate 5 tools² that allowed the writer to thoroughly evaluate IDRC's participation in this conference.

Utility was assessed by the degree to which the reviewers explicitly identify the users and uses of the evaluation and describe how the users participated in the process. The *Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) Program: External Evaluation Report* written by Philip Thomas provided an excellent example of clearly defined utility in an evaluation.

The primary purpose of this external evaluation is to measure initial impacts that the PCIA project and its outputs are having with intended users and to gather the information necessary to render an account for this project and its results to CIDA. A secondary purpose is to facilitate the institutional learning by reflecting

² These five tools are: 1) workshop participant surveys; 2) panel audience surveys; 3) Participant surveys; 4) Post-event interviews; and 5) Panel monitoring fact sheets. (p. 2)

on IDRC's own role and involvement in this project...The readers of this evaluation will be CIDA and IDRC. (p. 7)

A positive assessment of **feasibility** means that the methods and approaches were well matched to the questions and issues the evaluation set out to examine. Issues around resources, timing, perspectives represented, and information sources consulted can affect feasibility. This year only two reports were deemed to have insufficient detail to assess this aspect of quality, which indicates an improvement in this area, particularly since the ACE 2005 report.

Propriety in evaluation looks at both ethical issues as well as capacity. Again this year, there were no ethical issues to mention in any of the evaluations. Weaknesses in propriety tended to derive from the fact that evaluation reports seldom describe the ways in which they sought to add value to the project/program by *building the evaluative capacity of either the users of the evaluation or those being evaluated*. This is a high standard for evaluation and is consistent with the objectives of the Centre to build the capacity of those involved in Centre activities. Specifically, it is consistent with the Centre's principles for evaluation, notably that, "evaluation processes should develop capacity in evaluative thinking and evaluation use," and that, "evaluation should be an asset for those being evaluated" (Evaluation Strategy 2005-2010: 8). The Unit continues to encourage the application of these principles in the guidelines it provides as well as in its discussions with evaluators and program staff commissioning evaluations.

The Evaluation Unit will continue to assess future evaluations and collect data on quality. However, it is recognized that evaluation reports do not always provide a full description of the evaluation process and procedures. In an effort to encourage evaluations commissioned by the Centre to include this information, the Unit produced a series of Evaluation Guidelines (see Annex 6). This material is disseminated throughout the Centre on an on-going basis.

4 Learning from Evaluation

This section focuses on learning from evaluation over the past year. First is a report of the mutual learning of the Centre with one of its partners. The next section highlights how evaluation training can translate into increased evaluation capacity in the work of Centre partners. Learning from PCRs follows, with two examples of rPCR analyses and use: achievement of objectives and innovative outputs. Because of the growing Centre interest in the topic, organizational capacity development receives special attention based on findings from rPCRs as well as from the Centre's ongoing evaluation of capacity development. The final element is an article written by Kaia Ambrose for [Capacity.org](http://www.capacity.org) [www.capacity.org] magazine. It presents a practical, community-based experience with outcome mapping, and documents the usefulness of outcome mapping as a tool for both accountability and learning purposes.

4.1 What has IDRC learned from a project?

CIRMA: The Regional Research Centre for Meso America



Figure 1 “Why are we the way we are?”

CIRMA (Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Meso América) has been a partner of IDRC for almost ten years. The CIRMA project presented here is a campaign that contributes to social reconstruction in a war-torn country. It illustrates the utility of adopting a mixed methods approach to monitoring and evaluation for tracking behaviour changes and social attitudes that will influence real possibilities for policy change. This project also reflects how a strategic partnership between two IDRC units – the Evaluation Unit and the Peace, Conflict and Development Program – can leverage political opportunities and bring different strengths to Southern partners. Finally, the CIRMA project demonstrates how persistence and building on a locally-driven agenda are critical factors for effective capacity development.

Using Research to Tell the Truth About Violence and Racism: How the Story Begins

The Guatemalan internal armed conflict ended in 1996, leaving about 2% of the national population dead or disappeared – 83% of who were indigenous. The Historical Clarification Commission concluded that the Guatemalan state had committed acts of ethnic genocide against the indigenous population, placing Guatemala among a small group of nations that face the challenge of healing a society, which allowed the “unthinkable” to happen. Although most Guatemalans today recognize that racism is a problem, constructing a nation in which ethnic diversity is celebrated and everyone is a citizen in the fullest sense of the word is a task for many generations to come.

It was in this context that CIRMA, a research centre and library founded in the midst of the armed conflict in 1980, decided to dedicate major attention to developing research and educational strategies around the issue of racism in this country and region, as a contribution to the social reconstruction of Guatemala in the post-war period.

Between 1998 and 2003, IDRC through its Peace, Conflict and Development Program (PCD), supported CIRMA to produce an exhaustive multi-volume ethnographic study of the history and current tendencies of ethnic relations in Guatemala. CIRMA then used this study as the basis for an ambitious nation-wide effort to stimulate public reflection and dialogue, called the National Campaign for Interethnic Dialogue: *Our Diversity is Our Strength!*

The National Campaign for Interethnic Dialogue *Our Diversity is Our Strength!* was developed on the basis of a national consultation, which detected strong interest in addressing the issue of racism in Guatemala, and just as strong a fear as to how to address the issue without exacerbating existing tensions.

This challenge – how to create a mechanism for dialogue which would foster, and not hinder, intercultural reconciliation – was at the heart of the design of the Campaign, launched in June 2004. The Campaign has three components, developed with help from international experts on social violence and reconciliation:

- A 5,000 square foot interactive exposition, *Por Qué Estamos Como Estamos?* (*Why are we the way we are?*)
- The expo presents the history and current state of interethnic relations in Guatemala in an animated and colourful way through photographic images, videos and interactive games that invite people to reflect on their own lives in Guatemalan society.
- A guided process for group dialogue on the topic: the dialogues groups accompany the expo and aim to engage community leaders who are seen as multipliers in a discussion on how to transform the prevailing system; and
- A series of university teaching activities oriented toward designing an effective teaching package on racism and social inequality.

Mapping results of the Campaign

As CIRMA contemplated the content and structure of the Campaign, in 2003 the Evaluation Unit and PCD teamed up to support CIRMA in conceptualizing and putting into place a comprehensive system for monitoring and evaluating the results of the Campaign. Monitoring peoples' reactions to the Campaign was seen as a critical first step in assessing how the Campaign might contribute to changing peoples' attitudes and behaviours towards racism.

Through a series of peer support meetings and Outcome Mapping capacity building activities, IDRC worked with CIRMA staff in order to help them identify key boundary partners, those individuals and groups who the Campaign most hoped to influence in present day Guatemala: high school teachers in public and private schools, regional university authorities, university professors in the regions and social and political leaders in NGOs. IDRC support assisted CIRMA to put together a global monitoring and evaluation strategy that included a series of monitoring and data collection instruments; these were drawn from Outcome Mapping (outcome journals and performance journals) and other methods (questionnaires for dialogue participants, records of attendance at the expo, weekly reports by expo museum guides, interviews of expo attendees and national and international press clips on coverage of the campaign). All of this data was collected and tracked through specially designed software.

What the Campaign has achieved

Results from the first two years of the Campaign's deployment in three regions of the country have exceeded expectations, generating a wave of reactions both inside Guatemala and internationally. Between mid-2004 and mid-2006, the Campaign reached nearly 1000 social and political leaders through the dialogues, more than 500 university professors through the university trainings, and more than 117,000 visitors to the interactive exposition (nearly 1% of the national population). More people visited the exposition than visited Guatemala's other 22 museums combined over the same period of time.

The Campaign is the most extensive effort in Guatemala to date to address this critical issue head-on. It received the support of a broad cross-section of Guatemalan society, an extremely rare achievement in this post-conflict society. The data gathered by the Campaign indicates that the effort was received in general with high levels of acceptance and legitimacy. About 90% of the visitors to the Exposition responded "positively" while 5% on either side viewed it as either too "light" or too "radical."

The Campaign also received broad support from segments of the population that seldom agree on any issue. This could be seen in the makeup of the National Committee and Regional Support Committees, which included representatives of the central, regional, and municipal governments, academics, and leaders of diverse social organizations and private enterprise. Media support – written press, television, and radio – has gone well

beyond simple reporting. In fact the media became key allies, almost always providing the Campaign with ample and positive coverage. In 2004 alone, publicity firms donated more than \$800,000 in free radio, TV and billboard ads in addition to other types of support such as the provision of bottled water.

The exposition has also awakened the interest of diverse international organizations working in the field of human rights and research and education in post-conflict societies. A number of international foundations have requested presentations on the Campaign or have visited the expo with a view to documenting it as a model for reconciliation and educational innovation in a host of countries including Ethiopia, Eritrea, Serbia, Romania, Macedonia, Burma, Cambodia, Bolivia and Argentina.

What has been learned

After two years of collecting and analysing data, CIRMA has gathered diverse lessons regarding the effectiveness of the Campaign, the nature of ethnic relations, as well as how to approach the issue more effectively and for greater reach. Four important pieces of learning stand out:

Mass exposure to the Exposition: The Campaign reached 25% of the local population and 40% of the school population in two of the three Guatemalan departments, creating an important unanticipated effect. By saturating a specific population, the Exposition apparently created a neutral external reference point enabling people to safely discuss what had been a virtually taboo subject. This is an effect that CIRMA seeks to repeat by focusing on a critical mass of one social group during the next five years.

Young people are a critical group and are especially open: The original idea of targeting the expo to young people from 13-25 years of age was validated, as this group generally showed a special ability to reflect about their ideas and reality. However, CIRMA also observed that children from 10 years of age were just as responsive. Despite their openness, however, these young Guatemalans require more formal facilitation to help them to overcome a natural tendency to avoid this difficult issue.

Teachers are critical and especially resistant: At the other extreme were the teachers, who as a group were among the most ambivalent and resistant visitors to the Expo, with a tendency to stifle the reflection that their students were generating on their own. In the future, it will be critical to develop a sophisticated strategy both to help teachers to digest the issue and to become constructive participants in post-Exposition dialogues and investigation in the classroom.

Maximize the Exposition's efficiency and efficacy: Finally, an analysis of the costs involved in the first phase of the Campaign enabled CIRMA to develop a plan to maximize financial and programmatic efficacy and efficiency for the final phase. An analysis of reactions to different parts of the Exposition also allowed CIRMA to identify certain changes to make to content and form of the installation.

What's Next?

CIRMA has closed the Campaign for one year in order to evaluate results thus far and to plan for its re-launching in 2008. As the Campaign has proven itself to be a highly visible and socially legitimate learning space, CIRMA looks to influence policy by:

- (1) Producing a teaching methodology to effectively engage a critical mass of Guatemala's young people in systematic learning about racism in Guatemala and implications for the future of the country. CIRMA has been approached by the Ministry of Education to begin the development of primary and secondary school texts.
- (2) Facilitating an international program of exchange and learning on how to learn and dialogue about the highly conflictive issues of racism and other forms of social violence and exclusion. To this end, the expo will be installed on a highly visible site in Guatemala City in its civic centre. On the same site, CIRMA will be involved in the development of the International Institute of Learning on Social Reconciliation.

While much has been learned through the monitoring and evaluation strategy set-up for the campaign, the M & E framework needs to be adapted and streamlined for this next phase of work. Much of the data collected has yet to be analysed; in addition, some of the data collection instruments need to be simplified. IDRC will assist CIRMA with both of these challenges.

4.2 Building Evaluation Capacity: Learning from the International Program for Development Training Evaluation

As part of the Evaluation Unit's mandate to strengthen evaluation capacity, the Unit supports evaluation training for IDRC staff and Centre project partners. One such opportunity is the International Program for Development Training Evaluation (IPDET), offered annually by the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank in partnership with the Faculty of Public Affairs at Carleton University. IPDET provides two weeks of basic training on designing and conducting meaningful evaluations of development interventions, followed by two weeks of workshops on particular evaluation topics, theory, methodologies, approaches, and development sectors.

In a tracer study of IDRC participants supported to participate in IPDET from 2001-2005³, it was noted that IDRC's Evaluation Unit has sponsored 53 individuals to attend IPDET – 45 Southern-based project partners and eight IDRC staff. IDRC-sponsored participants praised IPDET for covering a range of evaluation methodologies, as well as increasing evaluation capacity and thinking in their research and their organization's work. Moreover, many participants found that IPDET provided networking opportunities

³ Lee, Rebecca. "Tracer Study Report: IDRC-Sponsored Participation in the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET)." 2006-10-16. (http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-109802-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

to ensure continued and sustainable opportunities for mutual learning and collaboration. While this study found that the majority of participants continue to be engaged in evaluation work, some participants felt that a lack of evaluation culture within their own organization created some challenges in applying their evaluation skills.

In the case of the Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ)'s project "Impact of Organizational Land Use and Local Communities in the West Bank", IPDET participation translated into improved research, evaluative thinking, and networking. The objective of ARIJ's research was to provide sustainable recommendations for Palestinian policymakers based on empirical evidence of the impacts of land and natural resource availability. IDRC sponsored the IPDET participation of two ARIJ researchers, Dr. Nael Salam and Dr. Sophia Saad. Following IPDET, ARIJ researchers used their new evaluation knowledge to ensure that their surveys would capture high-quality empirical evidence. This evidence formed the basis for a report on recommendations using a format Salman and Saad learned at IPDET. ARIJ researchers also reported increased evaluative thinking in their work: evaluation became an integral part of the whole research process. Moreover, IPDET has provided ARIJ with the opportunity to network with other researchers and evaluators from around the Mediterranean region⁴.

IPDET provides high-quality evaluation instruction and increases evaluation capacity for the Centre and its Southern partners. The Evaluation Unit will provide scholarships to four IDRC project partners in 2007.

4.3 Achievement of Project Objectives: Findings from rPCRs.

During the period covered in this review (1 January to 31 December 2006), the Centre completed 104 Stage 3 rPCRs (see Tables 7 & 8). An important question in the Stage 3 rPCR is related to the achievement of project objectives. Question 2 of Stage 3 rPCR asks responsible officers to rate the achievement of each project objective. This not only allows objectives to be ranked, but also lends itself to a broad quantitative analysis on the successes IDRC achieves and the challenges the Centre faces in this regard. This analysis looks at the achievement of both general and specific objectives, as they were ranked and listed in Stage 3 of each project objective.

⁴ Foss, Mark. "Palestinian Researchers Apply Evaluation Lessons to Land Use Project". *In Reports* magazine, 2004-11-04. http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-66313-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html.

General Statistics of Stage 3 rPCRs (1 January 2006 to 1 December 2006):

Table 7 Regional Break down										
All Asia	SE&S Asia	WARO	All Africa	SS Africa	S&E Africa	MENA	LACRO	North America	Global	Total
8	5	9	5	16	14	8	20	2	17	104

Table 8 Program Area Distribution						
	SEP	ENRM	ICT4D	IPS	PB CORP	Total
	45	27	25	4	3	104

Table 9: Objectives	
Mean, median & mode of total objectives	5
Fewest number of objectives	1
Greatest number	13

Table 10: rPCRs completed		
Number of rPCRs completed as an interview	76	Total 104
Number of rPCRs completed as a questionnaire	26	
Interviewer/Interviewee not Indicated	2	

General Objectives⁵ n = 43 (41% of total rPCRs)

Table 11: Ranking	
Fully Met	16
Somewhat Met ⁶	18
Not Ranked ⁷	9 (21%)

Of the 104 Stage 3 rPCRs conducted in 2006,

41% of reports clearly identified general objectives. Of these 43 general objectives, 37% were ranked “fully met”, 42% were ranked “somewhat met”. 21% of the listed general objectives were not assigned a ranking. Responses given to “somewhat met” were sorted into the categories listed in Table 12. The most common response was that *not all components of the general objective were met* (21%).

Table 12: Reasons given for why general objective was not met⁸	
Not all components met ⁹	9
Political issues	2
Objective too broad	2
Insufficient capacity	1
Objective no longer relevant	1
Insufficient funding	1
Staff turnover	1
No response	2

⁵ Objectives that noted that they were general in the responses given were also included in this category.

Specific Objectives n = 466

Table 13: Ranking	
Fully Met	246
Somewhat Met	193
Not Met	23
Not Ranked	4
Total	466

In total, the 104 reports list 466 objectives that were considered specific objectives.¹⁰ Of total specific objectives, 53%

were rated fully met, 41% were rated somewhat met, 5% were rated not met. Reasons given for not fully meeting project objectives are sorted into the categories listed in Table 14. Most commonly, responsible officers did not explain why the objective was not achieved. Other common responses include: *Implementation Issues* (15%); and *Objective Too Broad/Poorly Designed* (12%). Program Officers identified challenges in monitoring results as the primary reason for not giving the project a higher rating

Table 14: Reasons given for why specific objectives were not met¹¹ n=220	
Implementation issues	33
Objective too broad/poorly designed	26
Organizational/Political/Environmental Issues	21
Project Design Issues	17
Data/Evaluation issues	17
Lack of skills/human resources/	13
Staff turnover	8
Insufficient funding	4
Challenges with other donors	4
Other	24
No rationale provided	56 (25%)

Conclusion

The main purpose of this short analysis is to highlight one element (IDRC's achievement of project objectives) of the Stage 3 rPCRs. Two elements are noted for consideration: improvements in objective formulation are needed; and project monitoring data could be improved. Guidelines for completing rPCRs should be reviewed to ensure clarity of the importance of explaining in the case an objective is not fully met.

4.4 What outputs does IDRC consider innovative? Findings from rPCRs

As one of the world's leading institutions in the generation and application of new knowledge, IDRC is known for its practical and pioneering solutions to problems facing developing countries. In Stage 3 of the rolling Project Completion Reports (rPCRs), responsible officers are asked to comment on any outputs or dissemination efforts that were particularly innovative and useful (Question 4). The following review of *innovative*

⁶ Because the rPCR interview form changed throughout the calendar year, 45% of Stage Three rPCRs use a three-point rating scale, while 55% use a five point rating scale. For this reason, both general and specific objectives ranked 4 were added to 3 (somewhat met) and objectives ranked 2 were added to 1 (not met).

⁷ 21% of the rPCRs that explicitly listed general objectives did not rank performance

⁸ Three specific objectives listed two reasons why the objective was not met.

⁹ One general objective listed two reasons why the objective was not met.

¹⁰ If objectives were not clearly marked as General Objectives, they are considered specific objectives.

¹¹ Three specific objectives listed two reasons why the objective was not met.

outputs examines Stage 3 rPCRs from January 1 to December 31 2006. In this timeframe, the Centre completed 104 Stage 3 rPCRs.

Innovative Outputs n = 131

Table 15 – Reported Outputs	
Curricula/training material/toolkits	18
Publications	18
Reports/policy briefs	15
Media/communications	13
Annual Forum, workshops, conferences	12
GIS mapping system/software	11
Websites/ web portals	7
Indexes/databases/spreadsheets/resource tracking	6
Monitoring and Evaluation tools/data collection	5
Infrastructure/networks/committees	5
Models/systems	5
Case study reports	4
Masters-Phd support	4
Resource centres	2
Other	6
No response/None to note	16

Table 16 – Reasons given for why outputs are innovative¹²	
Methodology/Approach Used	19
Application/Scaling-up	7
Project designs	7
Policy Influence	7
Dissemination Strategies	5
Collaboration Process	5
Information in local languages	5
Capacity Building	4
Diversity and quantity of outputs	3
Other	8
No reason provided ¹³	23
No response	16

While it is not expected that every project will generate outputs considered innovative, a total of 131 innovative outputs were identified by responsible officers (see Table 15). Although one specific type of output does not stand out as an IDRC trend for 2006, Table 15 and 16 reveal a number of commonalities that surfaced in this review.

Some Innovative Outputs Highlighted:

Curricula/Training Material/Toolkits

A frequent innovative output listed in Stage 3 rPCRs was the development of *curricula/training material/toolkits* (14%). Responsible officers often noted that these outputs support the work of, and will be used by, a broad range of partners including policy makers, networks, communities groups, organizations, and universities.

“I think the project was innovative in the fact that they were able to integrate the teaching of telemedicine in the medical training at the university. They offer courses on introductory telemedicine and interactive teaching and learning...”

¹² In total 70 reasons were given by responsible officers for why outputs are innovative.

¹³ 23 responses listed outputs but did not provide a reason for why they are innovative.

(055432 - *Enhanced Access to Health Services and Information Through ICTs* - Edith Adera)

Publications

A number of rPCRs stated that projects produced innovative *publications* (14%). The types of publications in this category include chapters, books, journal articles, among others. These publications were often cited as being a key element in communication strategies and it was anticipated that they would influence academics, policy makers, and development practitioners.

“They are just about to publish the third book on their country series (on lowland, funded by the Dutch Embassy, Inter-Andean Valleys by DFID and IDRC, and now the Altiplano funded by IDRC). This is an original contribution because it presents basic information on land tenure in the country. This will be the yardstick for measuring change in the future, with the land reform currently conducted by the Morales government.”
(102002 - *Land Policy in Bolivia: Altiplano Module* - Simon Carter)

Media and Communication Techniques

Innovative communication strategies and techniques (10%) were listed by a number of responsible officers as the most innovative output of the entire project. These types of outputs ranged from radio programs, to movies, and theatre productions, as well as other dissemination strategies.

“‘Beyond Victims and Villains’ radio series; the movies that were produced (in several African languages); the direct engagement with mainstream South African media (e.g., the Soul City program); and the geomatic mapping exercise were all innovative. Overall, the project adopted a variety of innovative strategies for reaching youth – from mainstream media, to working with community leaders, to working with established agencies like UNICEF and their work in schools...”
(101477- *Sexual Violence and HIV Risk in South Africa* - Christina Zarowsky)

What does the Centre mean by innovative?

One of the key benefits of the rPCR process is that it allows responsible officers an opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges of the projects. Listed below are other key insights about why responsible officers considered certain outputs innovative.

“The design of the project and the capacity-building elements are both innovative; the project has used non-traditional researchers and trained them in ethnographic methods. This is fairly new in conflict-related work... The main output was the design of a longer-term project, plus “lining up ducks” in terms of organizations and individuals necessary to ensure that results could be used in key policy forums.”
(102081 – *A Regional Gender and Generational Analysis of Armed Conflict, Peace and Justice Processes, and DDR: Northern Uganda, Eastern Uganda and Southern Sudan* – Pamela Scholey)

“The program produced a number of innovative dissemination methods. For example, in Chile, a project attempted to highlight the role of women as custodians of biodiversity as well as recover the culinary knowledge and skills associated with the use of indigenous vegetables. Local women were asked to prepare a number of dishes using indigenous vegetables and these were served to the chefs of the major hotels. The chefs then

returned the favour, preparing a banquet – using the same vegetables and recipes – for the women and key policy-makers and personalities. The whole process was filmed and televised...”

(100356 – Community Biodiversity Development and Conservation Program, Phase II - Wardie Leppan)

“SciDev.net itself is a unique website both in the North and the South. A free-access website with regional networks feeding into the main hub in the UK. The regional portals are also a key feature adding to the innovativeness of SciDev.net”

(102165 – Core Support to SciDev.net Phase II – Jean Woo)



OutcomeMapping
LEARNING COMMUNITY

Box 3: Outcome Mapping Virtual Learning Community

When IDRC published the manual Outcome Mapping: Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs in 2001, the Evaluation Unit hoped that it would prove useful to the development researchers with whom the Centre works. The Unit did not anticipate the strong response it would receive. The challenges the Centre was facing in planning, monitoring, and evaluation were shared by many people, working in different sectors all over the world.

In 2005, an outcome mapping virtual learning community was established in order to provide a web space where people could network, find resources, and share experiences. What began as an impersonal technology, however, has grown into much more.

The over 350 members of the community freely share their experiences using Outcome Mapping (good and bad), support and learn from one another, and push forward the boundaries of thinking on the role that planning, monitoring, and evaluation can play in development research and encouraging social change. Through these interactions, rich collaborations have emerged and a deep kinship has developed.

In 2007, the community published a review of the content of the discussions during its first year. This publication will help expand the reach of outcome mapping, make the rich discussions available to those who did not participate, and encourage new members to join. It includes valuable insights into the theory and practice of outcome mapping and is an example of the substantial reach and contribution of an IDRC-developed methodology to the field of evaluation.



4.5 Highlights

- Strengthening Organizational Capacity in IDRC Project: What do rPCRs say?
- Working Together to Strengthen Skills – Evaluation Highlight 13
- The Influence of IDRC’s Work in Evaluation

5 Conclusion

ACE 2007 presents a summary of evaluation across the Centre in 2006-07. It addresses key issues facing the Centre as expressed in its evaluation activities. The evaluation system continues to be refined to respond to changing priorities and a changing environment for development research. Significant progress has been achieved in some areas, such as the move from implementation of a new project reporting system to using the data.

The report raises several issues for consideration by the Centre: within programs, improving monitoring and improving the definition of objectives to enhance the capacity to demonstrate results; and with IDRC's partners, supporting partner organizations to conduct evaluation for their own purposes

A significant effort by the Evaluation Unit was placed on building evaluation capacity with Southern partners this year. The Unit focused primarily on building the skills of individual evaluators; the IPDET evaluation encourages us to look at building the capacities of the Centre's partner organizations to use evaluation as a learning tool. The fundamental purpose of building evaluation capacity with our partners is to contribute to an endogenous knowledge system that promotes evidence-based decision-making, mutual accountabilities and contextually appropriate evaluation methodologies.

Overall ACE 2007 demonstrates the continued strong use of evaluation at the Centre. Over the past fifteen years, the Centre has developed a robust evaluation system that has both breadth and depth. Its complexity responds effectively to the current environment that calls for the demonstration of effective expenditure of Canadian development assistance.

STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN IDRC PROJECTS: WHAT DO rPCRs SAY?

Poor project results can be linked to organizational problems. IDRC rolling Project Completion Reports (rPCRs) tell us that organizational capacity and performance are important issues for reflection and monitoring in supporting research and working with partners. Sixty-six of the 117 rPCRs completed between September 2005 and September 2006 commented on organizational capacity. This analysis looks at what those 66 rPCRs reveal about intent, results, and lessons for strengthening organizational capacity.

Regional Breakdown

	SE Asia	S Asia	SS Africa	E&S Africa	C&W Africa	MENA	LAC	Global	Total
Asia	4	8	5	7	16	7	2	10	8
	4	8	5	7	16	7	2	10	66

Program Area Breakdown

ICT4D	SEP	ENRM	IPS	SID	PB CORP	Total
18	32	12	2	2	1	66

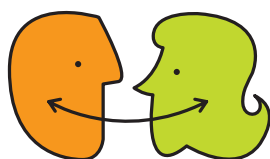
1. Intent to strengthen organizational capacity

Over half (58%) of the rPCRs that discuss organizational capacity and performance mention strengthening organizational capacity as an explicit or implicit project objective. Support was given to improve capacity related to conducting, managing, and using research; organizational practices; and/or overall organizational viability.

a) Conducting, managing, and using research: Project objectives were aimed at strengthening organizational capacity to conduct research; develop technical skills and sector-specific expertise; improve project implementation, management, and budgeting; manage and coordinate research activities and networks; and promote research use and communication.

b) Organizational practices: Organizational capacity can be divided into two broad areas: resources and management. Project objectives in this sample of rPCRs looked to strengthen resource capacity in human resources and organizational infrastructure, as well as managerial capacities to build linkages through networking, partnership, and collaboration; and improve leadership and management skills, organizational structure, processes and policies, and organizational learning processes.

This brief was prepared by Amy Etherington of IDRC's Evaluation Unit.



c) Overall organizational viability: Twelve rPCRs discussed project objectives that aimed at supporting organizations through core support, and strengthening transitional capacity and sustainability.

What did we set out to do? To devolve Schoolnet South Africa from the incubation it enjoyed in the IDRC ROSA offices over two years...to oversee the process by which Schoolnet SA is transformed into a fully representative, registered, non-profit organization. (101026 – rPCR, Schoolnet South Africa – Core – Stage 3, Heloise Emdon)

2. Results in strengthening organizational capacity

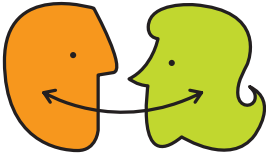
Forty of the 66 rPCRs reflected on improved organizational capacity. Of the 38 rPCRs with project objectives to support organizational capacity, the vast majority (79%) indicate that, to some extent, the objective was met. In discussing strengthened organizational capacity without related project objectives, 10 rPCRs indicated that organizational performance is on the project monitoring radar beyond what is articulated in project objectives.

Offering training to individuals in an organization does not necessarily add up to overall stronger organizational capacity. However, as individual employees share their skills and capacities with colleagues, these can become incorporated into the organization's culture, strategies, and structures. Organizational capacities that were strengthened in the sample of rPCRs included research and research management, reputation and profile, and partnership capacity. Overall organizational strengthening was highlighted in several rPCRs.

a) Strengthened organizational research and research management capacity: Improved research and research management capacity was discussed in 19 rPCRs. This included conducting and understanding research, accessing information, introducing multidisciplinary approaches and new areas of exploration, conducting collaborative research, coordinating research efforts within and across regions, sustaining research activities, and managing small grants. These capacities were strengthened through training, providing access to resources, mentoring, networking, and "learning by doing" activities.

The project also strengthened the research capacity of the Research Centre to conduct participatory and intersectoral/multidisciplinary research. As noted earlier, the integration among the sectors and disciplines is still a challenge for the researchers...However, huge strides have been made. Researchers have also recognized the importance of building rapport with communities, appreciation of local knowledge and resource management systems, and the double role of researcher as facilitator in some contexts. (100392 – rPCR, Enhancing Productivity Through Integrated Natural Resources Management – Stage 3, Elisabeth Fajber)

b) Enhanced organizational reputation and profile: IDRC support for research can help build research expertise and, in turn, enhance reputations and establish organizational niches. Six rPCRs discussed boosting organizational profiles, which helped to expand linkages and further funding.



The study on educational financing...positioned CNPRE at the cutting edge of the debate on education reform...[A]t the time, they were the only group in the country that had conducted research on the financial implications and requirements of the education reform process. The UN Human Development Report for 2003 named CNPRE's proposals as being one of the three most significant proposals for education in Guatemala...[CNPRE] has come to be recognized as one of the organizations with the foremost knowledge on the financing of education. (101034 – PCR, *Financing Education Reform: Possibilities in the Short and Medium Term* – Long, Colleen Duggan)

c) Improved partnership capacity: This sample of rPCRs included six projects that supported organizations to build their partnership capacity through collaboration and networks.

d) Overall organizational strengthening: A multidimensional approach involves looking beyond the research process to the needs of the organization. By providing financial, technical, and/or infrastructure support, IDRC projects have helped to strengthen both resource and managerial capacity. Of the eight rPCRs that discussed building overall organizational capacity, four provided core funding.

The project contributed to UT's [Universitas Terbuka] overall capacity building, including human resource development, communication infrastructure and facilities, as well as networking and partnerships...In terms of the implication of the research findings for institutional policy, this project contributed extensively to Internet-related developments within UT...The project helped to... [improve] the image of UT from being regarded as a conventional distance education institution...to a progressive provider of e-based distance learning (100570 – PCR, *ICT-Supported Distance Education in Indonesia: An Effort to Enhanced Student Learning Satisfaction & Course Completion Rate*, Maria Ng Lee Hoon)

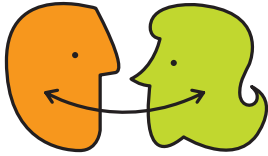
3. Lessons and insights for strengthening organizational capacity

What worked well?

a) Active support and project monitoring: The active role Program Officers play in supporting project development contributes positively to organizational capacity. Seven rPCRs noted the importance of involvement in the project proposal and development stages, as well as staying engaged throughout the project process.

b) Understanding context: Efforts to strengthen organizational capacity must take into account external and internal operating environments. rPCRs noted that certain organizations are more effective in different political environments. Organizational strengthening initiatives cannot be entirely externally led and the importance of internal motivation was also discussed. Flexibility in administering grants and in recipient reporting requirements allows IDRC projects to accommodate specific contexts without contributing to administrative and financial burdens.

NetNam was highly motivated through IDRC's Contribution Agreement that allowed it to generate revenue, but pay back the IDRC grant in terms of free services to non-profit



organizations, when it did make a profit. The IDRC formula of guaranteeing its capital cost as a grant if it did not make any profit, gave it a much-needed helping hand. (040276 – PCR, PAN (Vietnam) – Short, Maria Ng Lee Hoon)

c) Multidimensional approach: Incorporating various aspects of organizational capacity and performance into project design and activities can contribute to high-quality and timely results.

The aspects of this project which were particularly instructive were...the employment of good technical support when introducing new methodologies and systems[,...]the integration of the project within the wider CBMS network, permitting further technical enhancements of the methodology; and...the importance of building good partnerships between external technical resources, researchers, officials at national and local levels, and representatives in the local communities. (100961 – rPCR, Rural Poverty Monitoring Vietnam (Phase III) – Stage 3, Evan Due)

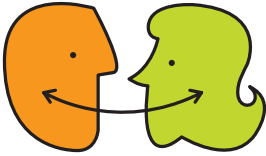
d) Investing in long-term partnerships: Long-term partnerships can help organizations strengthen their capacity and enhance their reputations. It also allows IDRC to realize its own program objectives through larger projects with lower risk levels. However, one rPCR cautioned about balancing long-term partnerships with a capacity-building mandate to support smaller projects and new organizations.

Our involvement demonstrates the utility of long-term, patient support to key institutions like the AERC. One concern to AERC Board and management is that donors may lose interest in mature institutions like this and shift their attention to “new” issues and programs. It is a credit to IDRC that it has maintained strong (and unrestricted) support to the AERC over the course of its history. Our contribution to the AERC’s Research Innovation Endowment Fund...is a new development, which is consistent with our goal of long-term institutional capacity building. (100985 – rPCR, African Economic Research Consortium, Phase V, Brent Herbert-Copley)

Recommendations

Organizational performance challenges cited in these rPCRs contributed to poor project outcomes, such as negatively affecting capacity to carry out project activities, extended project timelines, weaknesses in the quality of the research, and delayed reporting.

e) Greater emphasis on assessing organizational capacity: Fourteen rPCRs in this sample noted that a greater understanding and preliminary assessment of organizational capacity were necessary and that a closer examination of operating environments was required. Complications in these projects arose from weak capacity in governance structures and procedures, financial and administration management, organizational leadership and management, research capacity, and human resources. In extreme cases, weakness in organizational capacity can have very serious implications, including project termination and even organizational failure. In this sample of rPCRs, there are examples of both. In projects with capacity issues, targeted capacity building and close project monitoring are essential. Further complexities are added in multi-organizational projects or when there are different recipient and implementing organizations. Evaluation was



suggested as a way to measure and, ultimately, help strengthen organizational capacity.

IDRC should have determined whether CSV [Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation] had the capacity to manage and coordinate such a big project. This would have helped in determining what kind of capacity CSV needed and how this could be handled. Secondly there was need to assess the capacity of the partner organization to ensure that all were more or less at the same level and that they had capacity to deliver products at the same time. Most of the delays were due to the various partners not adhering to the time plan due to lack of capacity...An evaluation of the project and particularly the partnership component would have contributed to improving on similar programs in the future. (100830 – PCR, *Southern African Reconciliation Study*, Njeri Karuru)

f) Insufficient project design: Complications due to project design were mainly focused on a failure to incorporate organizational (nonresearch) costs into project budgets and staff turnover both in partner organizations and at the Centre.

One of the constraints encountered was the high turnover of researchers associated with this project and the lack of proper coordination and oversight on the part of the IDRC program officer. A serious oversight in the design of this project was the cost of coordination and the time of the finance manager at ESRF [Economic and Social Research Foundation] was not budgeted for. The institutional arrangements for this project were complicated and it needed close and careful on site monitoring. The turnover of POs also did not help in overseeing this project. (100604 – PCR, *International Trade and Gender in East Africa – Short*, Basil Jones)

4. What should IDRC do?

A final point on strengthening organizational capacity is offered in the following rPCR that asks an important question — what should IDRC do?

There are very few good policy research institutes in this part of the world. By all accounts, NEPRU [Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit] is one of the strongest. However given that they do not get core funding, they have encountered financial difficulties...We might consider institutional support instead of project funding, as we rethink the IDRC approach to providing support in the region...I would think that we in IDRC need to (given our mandate) ensure that NEPRU does not fail as an institution. In terms of research output, their work is very solid. Moreover, NEPRU provides an alternative to South African policy research institutes.

We need to look at institutions like NEPRU, and consider what urgent action IDRC can provide to stabilize weak institutions. What should IDRC do? If we allow them to go under, then we might not have partners to work with. When I was in Dakar, I found that the WARO office had a partner institution in a similar situation to NEPRU. IDRC should come up with guidelines on how to support such institutions. (103025 – rPCR, *Regional Integration, Trade and Private Sector Development – Stage 1*, Basil Jones)

Working Together to Strengthen Skills

IDRC's Strategic Evaluation of Capacity Development, Phase 3: Developing the Framework

March 2007

A central pillar of the International Development Research Centre's (IDRC) mission is developing local capacity in developing countries to undertake research and innovate. With this in mind, IDRC is undertaking a strategic evaluation to gain a deeper understanding of how it operationalizes its capacity support and the results that are achieved. This work draws on [previous phases](#)¹ of the strategic evaluation, summarized in [Evaluation Highlight 10 -Capacity Building Strategic Evaluation](#)².

Based on Phase 3 of the strategic evaluation, this Highlight offers a framework to capture how IDRC's support contributes to capacity development at the individual/group, organizational and network levels in the field. The goal is to help Centre staff conceptualize, plan, monitor and evaluate capacity development interventions in their work.

Background to the Study

The capacity development framework builds on the previous phases carried out in 2005 and 2006, where observations and analysis of IDRC's capacity development were obtained by assessing 43 projects, including in-depth interviews with relevant staff and partners.

One of the key findings in the previous phases of this strategic evaluation is that the beneficiaries of the Centre's efforts in capacity support are often IDRC's secondary and even tertiary partners – our boundary partners' boundary partners. This means that in order to determine the results achieved, it will be necessary to look further down the results chain to capture not only the changes that are occurring for our direct partners, but also those indirect beneficiaries who may have a partnership or association with the original partner. Therefore the framework attempts to not only capture if and how IDRC is developing the capacities of researchers, but how their partners are *also* developing the capacity of researchers.

The next step in this strategic evaluation is a series of case studies in the field. Drawing on what has been learned to date about IDRC and capacity development and applying the typologies that are the basis of this framework and a set of questions developed specifically for the case studies, it is anticipated that the real-life cases will validate and enrich the work to date on this vital topic.

Developing the Framework: Building on What We Know

Developing capacity at the local level is at the heart of the Centre's work. The definition of capacity development is provided in Box 1:

¹ http://www.idrc.ca/evaluation/ev-70623-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

² http://www.idrc.ca/evaluation/ev-96679-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Box 1: Definition of Capacity Development³ at IDRC

For IDRC, Capacity Development is the process by which individuals, groups, organisations, institutions and societies increase their ability to identify and analyse development challenges, and to have the ability to conduct, manage and communicate research that addresses these challenges over time and in a sustainable manner.

- Adapted from "IDRC-Supported Capacity Building: Developing a Framework for Capturing Capacity Changes" by Stephanie Neilson and Charles Lusthaus, February 2007.

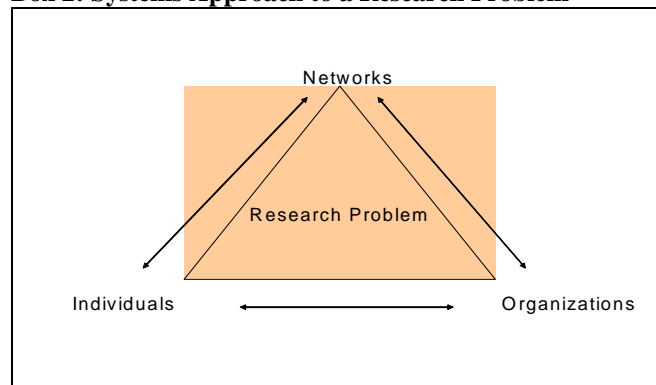
Findings to date note that IDRC-supported capacity interventions generally focus at the individual level – individuals and/or teams/groups. Even where the intervention is at the organizational/network level, the focus of change is predominantly about the individual, and how that individual is able (or not able) to influence change within their organization or network. As previously noted, it is also about how individuals have the capacity to build or establish relationships and partnerships to influence change, and how these partnerships and relationships interact within the various settings (organizations, networks).

A Systems Approach to Capacity Development

IDRC partners are connected to others within the research problematic or system. It is for this reason that assessing capacity also requires looking at how these individuals are connected to others. At IDRC, capacity development often take a *systems approach*. In other words, it not only addresses the individual(s) directly involved in the project, but also looks at how these individuals are connected to others: other individuals, organizations, and/or networks (see Box 2).

It is clear that it is only through examining the dynamics and evolution of how all the involved parties and communities work together to solve the development challenge that we will better understand how IDRC supports *the capacity to do research-related activities*.

Box 2: Systems Approach to a Research Problem



Additionally, in IDRC's view of *complete capacity*, there is a need to pay attention to and fund multiple functions to enhance the capacity to do research-related activities, including how to conduct, manage, and communicate research. IDRC areas that provide capacity development include:

- Programs Branch
- Evaluation Unit
- Partnership and Business Development Division
- Research Information Management Services
- Grants Administration Division

³ This concept has been called *capacity building*, *capacity development*, or even *collaborative learning* by various donors and development organizations. For the IDRC Capacity Development Strategic Evaluation, the term *capacity development* was chosen because it refers to an iterative process of strengthening pre-existing skills.

A set of key questions can be used to systematically design or evaluate capacity development initiatives (see Box 3).

Box 3: Key Questions on Capacity Development

Which entry point is used for the research problem?

- individual
- organizational
- networks

How does IDRC /provide support to its partners?

- using which abilities?
- to provide what solutions?
- at which level?

Other key questions to address include:

- What are the dynamics among the entry points?
- What are the relationships that are created to help develop capacities?
- How do these relationships and capacities change over time?

Good Practices for Capacity Outcomes

Through each phase of this work, Centre staff and partners identified or discussed a number of factors that contribute to the success of building research capacities (see Table 1). This early list of “good practices” begins to capture some of the elements of IDRC’s support that staff and partners view as being critical to building sustainable research organizations and systems.

TABLE 1: GOOD PRACTICES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO IDRC’S CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (ADAPTED FROM DAC, 2003 AND IDRC’S CORPORATE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK, 2006).	
GOOD PRACTICES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	MANIFESTED IN IDRC THROUGH:
IDRC characteristics	
Persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained mentoring • Continuity, prolonged engagement • Iterative learning process • Aim to build legitimacy, credibility and trust
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding arrangements • Location within Canadian government system • Agility to respond to developing country needs
Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay engaged under difficult circumstances • Provide legitimacy, credibility and trust
Building Partnerships	
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networks of individuals and organizations/institutions • Inter-organizational linkages • Face-to-face interactions between/among IDRC staff and researchers • Providing legitimacy and credibility to partners and beneficiaries

TABLE 1: GOOD PRACTICES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO IDRC’S CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (ADAPTED FROM DAC, 2003 AND IDRC’S CORPORATE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK, 2006).	
GOOD PRACTICES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	MANIFESTED IN IDRC THROUGH:
Harnessing Existing Capacities	
Strategic Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan locally and globally, reinvent locally – regional presence to determine existing capacities • Staff knowledge of regions
Build on existing capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained mentoring – provide long-term support beyond “one-off training” sessions • Regional presence – to determine existing capacities • Use local, existing capacities rather than creating parallel systems
Relevance of the Problem	
Locally-driven agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local ownership • Local and global participation in determining the agenda • Programs continually evolving to meet developing country demands • Bring southern perspectives and voices to the analysis of development challenges • Support devolvement of major research initiatives when appropriate

Enhancing learning in the M&E process

Outcome mapping in Ecuador

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The Ceja Andina project has shown that with Outcome Mapping it is possible to engage a wide range of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation that can satisfy the need for accountability as well as learning about the process of change.

The Ceja Andina project is working to ensure the sustainability of agriculture and forest biodiversity in the Andes of northern Ecuador. Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and implemented by Corporación EcoPar, an Ecuadorian research NGO, the project works with a diverse range of stakeholders, from farmer research groups to local municipalities. Together, they aim to develop knowledge, capacities and social learning to support community-based natural resource management.

Before commencing, the Ceja Andina project team members and stakeholders came together to discuss the monitoring and evaluation objectives. All participants in the project were conscious of the need to engage in some form of accountability exercise, but also wanted to place high priority on collective and individual learning. We began by examining the purpose of doing M&E through open and facilitated discussions involving the project team and its 'boundary partners' – individuals, groups and/or organisations with whom the project works in order to influence and support changes in behaviour.

The purpose of M&E

Was M&E necessary to ensure accountability? If so, to whom? Or was it intended to encourage learning processes, at the group, organisational and/or individual levels? It was agreed that the objective of M&E was not to produce voluminous reports recording all the things the project had done to 'achieve impact', but rather to identify and analyse the changes taking place in groups and individuals involved in the project, what worked and what didn't, and how the project could continually improve.



The project defined success not just as the achievement of material goals such as an increase in the number of trees planted, watershed management plans developed, improved water quality, or reduced soil erosion. Even more important were the complex and progressive changes in the behaviour of the actors involved, on whom such material changes depend. Collective learning came through an analysis of how those changes were shaped, and what changes each individual or group (including the project team) has the power to influence.

What the project wanted to examine was in fact the changes – especially behavioural changes – that were taking place, and not simply to make a claim to them. As a group, we required a methodology and a set of tools that would allow us to tell a story demonstrating the richness of the changes going on behind the scenes, and not just those at centre stage. Outcome Mapping (OM) proved to be such a methodology.

Best used as a facilitated participatory and inclusive process, OM helps a programme, or project team, to identify those actors with whom it wants to work, what changes it expects to see (outcomes), and the strategies it can use to support those changes. An essential aspect of OM is that 'outcomes' are defined as changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities or actions of the people, groups and organisations that are within the project's ability to influence.

Organising ourselves

In order to learn from change, and to learn together by celebrating successes and examining failures, the project team, together with our boundary partners, decided at the outset that the M&E process should be a participatory one. We hoped that the process would provide a space for social learning and creative dialogue, bringing together the different perceptions, experiences and actions of boundary partners and other stakeholders in the development of the region. We also envisaged that this common space would work with this diversity to encourage discussion and negotiation, resulting in a common vision and shared priorities, as well as plans for concerted action based on the recognition of the interdependence of all the actors involved.

In our efforts to keep with this goal, we developed participatory planning sessions, where the project facilitated negotiation and concerted action among boundary and strategic partners. We also organised and facilitated two-day monitoring workshops with our boundary partners, held every six months, that allowed us to explore 'what happened' and who had contributed to it. Not only did these sessions allow us to monitor and assess the different contributions. They also helped us to plan modifications and improvements with a focus on 'sharing the workload' among the boundary and strategic partners. That we had reached consensus on a common vision at the start of the project helped us to maintain this complementarity, as this became a reference point to guide strategy formulation and actions, and against which we were then able to track performance.

Discoveries about OM

Outcome Mapping did not answer all of our M&E queries. In fact, in its application it created even more questions, which in turn resulted in fruitful reflection and dialogue on monitoring and evaluation in general. Some of the main points that emerged from that dialogue are sketched out in the following.

OM is not a panacea. It does not replace the log frame approach (LFA). However, by discussing the usefulness of OM and LFA, and identifying the gaps in the two approaches, we were able to determine when it was best to use one or the other. We also began to explore other complementary tools and methodologies. For example, the log frame approach can be useful in outlining the broad scope or reach of the project, and the 'change in state' that the project is aiming to achieve. By complementing this approach with OM, a project can put its plans 'under the microscope' and look at what really causes such changes in state, or changes in the behaviour of different actors. The project then has the opportunity to plan, examine, analyse and adjust its strategies to support those changes in behaviour, before trying to account for changes in state. Besides the log frame approach, there are many other complementary tools and methodologies that can help to strengthen the OM process. For example, when using the monitoring journals in OM, some practitioners have found it useful to bring in the 'most significant change' methodology.

Outcome Mapping is only as good as the facilitation that is used to apply it. Indeed, effective facilitation is imperative for its success. An external facilitator is not always necessary. The Ceja Andina project implemented OM with internal facilitation, although other projects and programmes have found external facilitators useful for OM training, intentional design workshops, and to provide assistance during the monitoring and evaluation. OM, especially when it aims to create collective learning processes, must be guided by someone who can dedicate time to it, and who also has a solid background in facilitation. Adequate resources must be planned for and dedicated to this process.

OM can be replicated in a diverse range of settings and contexts, but an understanding of OM's central concepts – behavioural change, contribution and not attribution, finding the balance between accountability and learning – is vital. With these key concepts guiding the process, OM can still be flexible enough to meet the monitoring and evaluation needs of a programme or project. It inspires and encourages creativity, so that the likelihood of endogenous change processes being created is high.

At a broader level, there must be further exploration of how OM and the learning that emerges from it can contribute to policy processes, civil society strengthening, advocacy and good governance.

Accountability and learning



If a programme, project or organisation is truly interested in achieving a balance between accountability and learning, this will require judicious choices about what needs be monitored and evaluated. For the Ceja Andina project, the richness of the information produced during the OM process presented us with the challenge of deciding what information it was 'necessary' to collect for accountability purposes, and what data needed to be analysed to contribute to learning.

Developing a detailed and well thought out monitoring and evaluation plan (with corresponding resources, such as budgets and human resources), as well as planning, organising and facilitating the monitoring workshops, helped to streamline the M&E processes using OM, and to make them more effective learning opportunities.

As our writing and reporting skills improved, many practical tasks became simpler and more transparent. In our reporting to IDRC, we were able to honestly 'tell the story' of what had happened, including whether or not the strategies we had developed had contributed to outcomes, and what other strategies (set by other stakeholders, including our boundary partners) had contributed as well. The process was iterative but successful, judging from the positive feedback received from our partners and stakeholders, as well as from IDRC.

Diverse perspectives

For all the stakeholders in the Ceja Andina project, taking on and implementing OM was a valuable and creative experience. It helped to develop the capacities not only of the project team, but of its partners as well. Through participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation, these partners were able to exercise and therefore increase their capacities for critical analysis, social learning, team building and negotiation, and constructing consensus. The project team, through the use of OM, incremented their capacity to facilitate the process. It also pushed the team to look at this particular initiative from diverse perspectives, particularly those related to behavioural change.

The results of using this approach, and the capacities produced because of the high level of engagement of all parties involved in the process, has led the Ceja Andina project to conclude that Outcome Mapping is a methodology that is tremendously conducive to achieving learning with and accountability to multiple stakeholders.

Links

[Corporación EcoPar](#)

[International Development Research Centre \(IDRC\) Outcome Mapping](#)

[International Association for Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#)

[International Institute for Facilitation and Consensus \(IIFAC\)](#)

[Latin American Center for Outcome Mapping \(LACOM\)](#)

[Outcome Mapping Learning Community](#)

[Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action \(RCPLA\)](#)

Further reading

S. Earl et al. (2001) [Outcome Mapping: Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs, IDRC.](#)

[B.M. Kibel, Focusing on spirit: The journey mapping approach](#)

S. Montague et al. (undated) [Using Circles to Tell the Performance Story](#)

T. Smutylo (2005) Outcome Mapping: A Method for Tracking Behavioural Changes in Development Programs, [ILAC Brief 7, CGIAR.](#)

[Outcome Mapping Users' Workshop, Lima, Peru, October 2004 .](#)

Annex 1 Acronyms

ACE	Annual Corporate Evaluation Report
AfrEA	African Evaluation Association
ALF	Annual Learning Forum
ARIJ	Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem
AUCC	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
BoG	Board of Governors
C&W Africa	Central and West Africa
CA	Connectivity Africa
CAF	Corporate Assessment Framework
CASID	Canadian Association for Studies in International Development
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CD	Capacity Development
CFSK	Computers for Schools Kenya
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIRMA	Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Meso América
COPEH	Community of Practice in EcoHealth
CS+PF	Corporate Strategy and Program Framework
DPA	Director of Program Area
EcoHealth	Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health Program Initiative
ENRAP	Knowledge Networking for Rural Development (Asia/Pacific)
ENRM	Environment and Natural Resource Management Program Area
EU	Evaluation Unit
FCRI	Focus Cities Research Initiative
GAD	Grant Administration Division
GEH	Governance, Equity and Health Program Initiative
GGP	Globalization, Growth and Poverty Program Initiative
ICA	Institute for Connectivity in the Americas
ICCGP	Institute of Comparative Studies and Criminal Law in Guatemala
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre (previously International Council for Research in Agroforestry)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technologies for Development Program Area
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
ILEAP	International Lawyers and Economists Against Poverty
IPDET	International Program for Development Evaluation Training (Canada)
IPS	Innovation, Policy and Science Program Area
ITS	Information, Technology and Science Program Initiative
LAC	Latin American and the Caribbean
LACRO	IDRC Regional Office Latin America and the Caribbean
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MercoNet	Mercosur Economic Research Network

MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
N Asia	North Asia
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OM	Outcome Mapping
PA	Program Area
PB Corp	Programs Branch Corporate Project
PBDD	Partnerships and Business Development Division
PCD	Peace, Conflict and Development Program Initiative
PEP	Poverty and Economic Policy Network
PI	Program Initiative
PL	Program Leader
PO	Program Officer
PPB	Program and Partnership Branch
PPG	Policy and Planning Group
R&D	Research and Development
RD	Regional Director
RIMISP	Latin American Centre for Rural Development
RITC	Research for International Tobacco Control
RO	Research Officer
RoKS	Research on Knowledge Systems
rPCR	rolling Project Completion Report
RPE	Rural Poverty and Environment Program Initiative
S&E Africa	South and East Africa
SE & S Asia	Southeast and South Asia
SEP	Social and Economic Policy Program Area
SID	Special Initiatives Division
SMC	Senior Management Committee
SS Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa
TEC	Trade, Employment and Competitiveness
TL	Team Leader
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UPE	Urban Poverty and Environment Program Initiative
WARO	IDRC Regional Office for West and Central Africa
WRC	Women's Rights and Citizenship Program Initiative

Annex 2 IDRC's Approach to Evaluation – Evaluation Highlight 12

IDRC's Approach to Evaluation

April 2007

IDRC's approach to evaluation mirrors the Centre's approach to development research programming. The Centre recognizes that evaluation makes an essential contribution to learning and acquiring knowledge about effective approaches to research for development.

This highlight presents an overview of evaluation at IDRC by summarizing the different aspects of the Centre's approach to evaluation, its methodological underpinnings, and the results reporting system. Further information about evaluation at IDRC can be found on the Centre's website (www.idrc.ca/evaluation).

An Introduction to IDRC:

Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) supports the generation and application of new knowledge to provide practical, long-term solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems facing developing countries. It is a crown corporation created by the Parliament of Canada in 1970 to help developing countries use science and technology. Support is directed toward developing an indigenous research capacity to sustain policies and technologies that developing countries need to build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies. In carrying out its central mission *empowerment through knowledge*, IDRC provides funds for applied research and expert advice for researchers in developing countries, while building local capacity for research and innovation.

Approach to Evaluation:

IDRC recognizes the essential role that evaluation plays in the effective management of research projects and in producing relevant results from the research process. Its overall approach to evaluation prioritizes equally the use of rigorous methods in evaluation, and the use and adoption of evaluation findings. In order to coordinate the evaluation efforts of the Centre, a small unit was established in 1992. The Evaluation Unit supports the priorities of the Centre through the promotion of methodological development and processes of evaluative thinking that balance the opportunity to learn and the need for accountability.

By emphasizing a strong commitment to respond to, and balance, the needs of all of its partners, IDRC recognizes that upward, internal, horizontal and downward accountability are essential to its performance. Further these different levels of accountability need to be prioritized based on influence, responsibility and representation. Only by continuous learning and improvement can the Centre be more effective in carrying out its mandate and responding to its stakeholders. Accordingly, the Centre has several formal mechanisms in place to promote improved effectiveness, including: [a five-year corporate strategy](http://intranet.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/11256802861CSPF_2005_e.pdf)¹; and [external evaluations](http://intranet.idrc.ca/en/ev-89474-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)² of Centre programs at least every five years; (also see below: IDRC's Evaluation and Results Reporting System).

¹ http://intranet.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/11256802861CSPF_2005_e.pdf

² http://intranet.idrc.ca/en/ev-89474-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

IDRC's approach to evaluation prioritizes valid and credible evaluations of high quality, using the most suitable methods to the situation. This approach focuses on building the ownership of, and participation in, evaluation by a broad range of partners. A key outcome of the evaluation process is informed social participation. In this way, evaluation makes a contribution to better governance, and transparency. Through our work in strengthening evaluation capacity and building the field of evaluation for development, IDRC not only contributes to a more effective development research community, but to evidenced-based decision making.

Evaluation and Results Reporting System:

Evaluation at IDRC is decentralized. Programs are responsible for their own evaluations. The Evaluation Unit provides central coordination and technical support. The Unit also conducts strategic evaluations and provides oversight on the evaluation system. IDRC is not only concerned with results because of the funding provided (what happened?), but also the processes, people, and contexts that contribute to change (how? and why?). By focusing on both results and processes, IDRC aims to demonstrate the outcomes of the development research it supports, while capturing rich learning and quality lessons that can be applied usefully.

Table 1 summarizes the evaluative mechanisms that are in place at each of the three levels of the Centre.

Table 1 IDRC's Evaluation and Results Reporting System					
Org. Level	Reporting Mechanism	Content/ Focus	Responsibilities	Primary Users and Uses	Timing
Corporate	Annual Corporate Evaluation Report (ACE)	Synthesis of findings from the year's evaluation reports	EU: Prepare report SMC: Review and respond	SMC: Review and formulate actions to be taken BoG: Review and react to findings	Annual
	Corporate Assessment Framework (CAF)	Assesses management of performance in 7 key performance areas	EU: Coordinate data collection and synthesis. PPG: Archive and communicate with SMC	SMC: Use data in deliberations and decision-making	Annual
	Strategic Evaluations	Assess cross-cutting issues emerging from programming	EU: Conduct studies SMC, PPB: Engage, reach, and use	PPB: Improve programming SMC: Demonstrate results	Periodic
	Annual Learning Forum (ALF)	Findings from rPCRs and other evaluative documents	EU, PPG & PPB: Coordinate and organize	All Staff: Reflect and share on performance of IDRC to improve programming.	Annual

Table 1 IDRC's Evaluation and Results Reporting System

Org. Level	Reporting Mechanism	Content/Focus	Responsibilities	Primary Users and Uses	Timing
Program	Regional Director and Director of Program Area Reports	Outline progress and directions of program areas and regional representation	DPA, RD: Prepare reports	SMC, BoG: Use as inputs into programming directions and organizational management	Every year – alternates between RD and DPA reports
	External Reviews	Summative evaluations	PPB Management: Set Terms of Reference EU: Manage studies on behalf of PPB management	PPB Management: Input into decision making and resource allocation to programs Project Teams: Integrate findings into next prospectus	Once at the end of the program cycle
	Program Monitoring and Evaluation	Variable: Formative evaluations	Program Team: Design and commission studies EU: Provide technical advice	PIs: Improve and adjust programming	Variable: throughout prospectus cycle
Project	Project Monitoring and Evaluations	Variable: Formative and Summative evaluations	PO, PL: Initiate and conduct or commission studies	PO, PL: Improve and adjust programming	Variable: throughout the project cycle
	rolling Project Completion Reports [rPCR]	Learnings and results from project design, implementation phase, and completion of project	<u>On 3 projects per program per year:</u> Stage 1: RO interviews PO Stage 2: TL interviews PO <u>On all projects over \$150 000</u> Stage 3: PO selects colleague or manager to interview or completes independently (Stage 1 and 2 are completed on selected projects; Stage 3 on all projects over CAD \$150 000)	SMC: Accountability for public resources Programs: Improve and adjust programming EU, PPG: Corporate learning and communications	Throughout the project cycle
	Recipient Interim & Final Technical Reports	Research, findings, development results and process	PL: Prepares the report PO: Reviews and approves report.	PL, PO: Accountability, document learning, manage project	Throughout the project cycle

Evaluative Thinking/Utilization-Focused:

One of the central roles the Evaluation Unit plays is strengthening a culture of evaluative thinking across the Centre. Evaluative thinking shifts the view of evaluation from only the study of completed projects and programs to an analytical way of thinking that infuses and informs everything the Centre does. *Evaluative thinking* is being clear and specific about what results are being sought and what means are used to achieve them. It assures the systematic use of evidence to report on progress and achievements. Thus, information informs action and is used in decision-making.

IDRC's approach to evaluation is utilization-focus and does not advocate any particular evaluation content, model, method, or theory. By promoting appropriate methodology for particular use, the Centre acknowledges that no one methodology suits every situation. Rather the primary intended users of evaluations should select the most appropriate focus, methodology and approach.

List of Acronyms:

ACE	Annual Corporate Evaluation
ALF	Annual Learning Forum
BoG	Board of Governors
CAF	Corporate Assessment Framework
DPA	Director of Program Area
EU	Evaluation Unit
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
GAD	Grant Administration Division
PI	Program Initiative
PL	Program Leader
PO	Program Officer
PPB	Programs and Partnership Branch
PPG	Policy and Planning Group
RD	Regional Director
RO	Research Officer
SMC	Senior Management Committee

Annex 3 Evaluation Planning 2007-2008

Evaluation Plans 2007-2008				
Program Initiative	New Evaluations	\$	On-Going Evaluations	\$
Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM)				
Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health (EcoHealth)	Evaluation of policy influence of COPEH in Africa and Latin America	\$80,000	UNEP-led evaluation of the Eco-health Regional Funds	Funded by UNEP
Rural Poverty and Environment (RPE)	Evaluation of ICRAF projects	\$80,000	Impact Assessment of the African Highland Initiative	Project Budget
			Individual and organizational capacity development for CBNRM	Project Budget
			Connaissances endogènes et gestion de la biodiversité in Togo	Project Budget
			Honduras External Evaluation	Project Budget

Program Initiative	New Evaluations	\$	On-Going Evaluations	\$
Urban Poverty and Environment (UPE)	Regional Workshop. Assessing the impact of research results in Environmental Municipal policy in LAC FCRI Project level mid-term evaluations	\$125, 000 TBA	Focus City Capacity Building for monitoring outcomes	\$52,200
Climate Change and Adaptation in Africa	None		None	
Social and Economic Policy (SEP)				
Globalization, Growth and Poverty	External Review ARTNET	TBA	External evaluation of Gender Network project (103637)	\$35,000
	External Review ILEAP	TBA	External Review PEP	\$40,000
			External Review MercoNet	\$32,000
Governance, Equity and Health (GEH)	Baseline and tools to M&E progress in component 1 – “project clusters”	In-house	Africa Health Research Forum (Project Evaluation)	\$10,000
	Review current GEH evaluation strategy, particularly Outcome Mapping	In-house	Gender evaluation, team and partner strengths to build on	\$7,500
Peace, Conflict and Development (PCD)	Institutional Evaluation for the Institute of Comparative Studies and Criminal Law in Guatemala (ICCGP)	\$40,000	Conflict Evaluation	\$50,000
Women’s Rights and Citizenship (WRC)			Assessing Gender Unit Competition Series	\$65,500
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT4D)				
Pan Americas	TBA		TBA	

Program Initiative	New Evaluations	\$\$	On-Going Evaluations	\$\$
Pan Asia	Networks - Networking Modality	TBA		
Connectivity Africa	External Review of Institute for Connectivity Africa	\$69,682	Evaluation of Acacia networks	\$400 000
telecentre.org	Telecentre Academy (mini study)	TBA		
	Telecentre Workshops Learning	TBA		
	Social Impact of Public Access Computing			
Innovation, Policy and Science (IPS)				
Information, Technology and Science (ITS)	African Technology Policy Studies Network Evaluation	\$200,000	Peer-to-Peer Development and Support of Science Journalism in the Developing World	Project Budget
	RoKS Competitions 101099 and 101678 (evaluation on impact of grant and capacity-building)	\$50,000		
	Global Dialogue on Nanotechnology and the Poor	\$25,000		
Other Programs and Partnership Branch				
SID	The Canadian Council for Area Studies Learned Societies	\$40,000	Evaluation with the AUCC (the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada)	\$36,700
PBDD	None		None	
Challenge Fund	None		None	

Program Initiative	New Evaluations	\$\$	On-Going Evaluations	\$\$
President's Office				
Evaluation Unit	Evaluability Assessment of the Centre's Flex Funds ENRM External Reviews Regional Strategic Evaluation (with SARO and ASRO) on Organizational Capacity		Capacity Building Study: 6 Case Studies Networks Study—Communication and Dissemination Competitive Grants in IDRC: Guidelines for Design and Management and Monitoring.	
Communications	None		In-Focus Series The Corporate CD Large Conferences - Landscape and Evaluability Study with EU Evaluating Cross-Country Tours	

Annex 4 Evaluation Reports Received by the Evaluation Unit-2006-2007

Project and Program Evaluation Reports, Received 2006-2007					
Title, Author(s), Date	Inventory Number	PA, PI, External Org.	Projects Covered	Period Covered	Country/Region
1- Monitoring and Evaluation of WARO council of regional advisors workshop and thematic discussion, Michael W. Bassey, 30/03/2006	587	WARO	WARO	2004 - 2006	West and Central Africa
2- Consumer rights and the elimination of poverty through trade, Julian Edwards, 01/01/2006	588	Consumers International (related to TEC, GGP)	101032, 102331	2004 - 2005	Global
3- A Mid-Term Review of the Southern African Trade Research Network, Peter Draper, 25/03/2004	589	TEC	100816	2003 - 2004	South Africa
4- Building an Economics Profession in Africa: An Evaluation Phase V of the African Economic Research Consortium, Rashid Hassan and Henry Rempel, 01/02/2005	590	AERC (related to TEC)	102829	2000 - 2003	Sub-Saharan Africa
5- International Lawyers and Economists Against Poverty (ILEAP) Preliminary Review, Joseph Hoffman, 21/01/2005	591	DFID (related to TEC)	100985	2004 - 2005	Africa and Caribbean
6- Pan Asia ICT Research and development Grants Programme, Michael Dougherty, 01/05/2006	592	UNDP Regional Centre Thailand (related to Pan Asia)	101060	2002 - 2005	Pan Asia
7- ENRAP II: Knowledge networking for rural development in the Asia Pacific Region. Grant Completion and Evaluation Report, Vikas Nath, 01/05/2006	593	IFAD (Rome) (related to Pan Asia)	101221	2001 - 2006	Pan Asia
8- Options for an Award Program for Research into UPE, George Tillman Consulting, 15/05/2006	594	UPE	100824	2001 - 2006	Global

Project and Program Evaluation Reports, Received 2006-2007					
Title, Author(s), Date	Inventory Number	PA, PI, External Org.	Projects Covered	Period Covered	Country/Region
9- Making the Edible Landscape: Participatory Planning, Design and Development of Garden Neighbourhoods- Mid-term Evaluation Report. Michel Frojmovic, 29/07/05	595	UPE	102440	2004-2006	Global
10- Regional Training & Knowledge Sharing in Urban Agriculture for the Middle East, Ramzi Naaman, 01/05/2006	596	UPE	102696	2005 -	Middle East
11- RIMISP - Latin America Center for Rural Development: An Institutional Evaluation, <i>Anthony Bebbington</i> , 01/05/2006	597	RIMISP (related to MINGA and RPE)	100730, 050265, 050321, 959252, 050197, 910222, 900033, 900137, 900137, 890333, 890007, 880151	1989 - 2005	LAC
12- Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment Program – External Evaluation Report, Philip Thomas, 01/12/2004	599	PCD	100226	2001-2004	Sri Lanka, Uganda, Kenya
13- Evaluaciòn integral del portal@Campus Mexico, <i>Carlos Congalez de la Mora</i> , 30/11/2005	600	ICA	101595	2003 - 2005	Mexico
14- IDRC at the 11th World Congress on Public Health/8th Brazilian Congress on Collective Health, August 21st to 25th, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, <i>Lucy Gray-Donald</i> , 09/10/2006	601	GEH/Ecohealth	103695	2006 -	LAC
15- Evaluation of Echohealth Projects Development Outcomes and Changes related to Human Health Well-being promotion and environmental sustainability, <i>Jean RemyDavée Guimaraes, Eduardo Luiz Andrade Mota</i> , 01/09/2006	602	EcoHealth	102469	2003 - 2006	Malawi, Goa, Ecuador and Cuba
16- Organisational Assessment of the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID), <i>Anna Grzybinska and</i>	603	SID	103091	1996 - 2006	Global

Project and Program Evaluation Reports, Received 2006-2007					
Title, Author(s), Date	Inventory Number	PA, PI, External Org.	Projects Covered	Period Covered	Country/Region
<i>Christine Milton Feasby, 06/10/2007</i>					
17- Computers for Schools Keny (CFSK) Evaluation report, Daniel J. Babikwa, Ayub Macharia, Lazarus Kivuva, 01/01/2001	604	ACACIA	Not Available	2003 - 2005	Kenya
18- Start-Up evaluation: telecentre.org, April Pojman, 30/03/2006	605	telecentre.org	103383, 103537, 103541, 103588, 103602, 103615, 103622, 103691, 103543, 103535, 103538, 103381	2005 -	Global
19- Asociaciones Multisectoriales Para La Gestión Sustentable Del Agua En Las Ciudades De América Latina Y El Caribe Nuevos Modelos Institucionales Para La Gestión Ambiental Urbana Evaluación Comparativa De Los Resultados De Los Estudios, Luis Egocheaga and Julio Moscoso, 30/11/2006	606	UPE	103595	2003 - 2006	LAC

Annex 5 Guide for Assessing Quality

1. UTILITY		2. FEASIBILITY	
<p>1.1 Were the users explicitly identified?*</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1.2 Were the uses explicitly identified?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1.3. Did the report describe how users participated in the evaluation process?***</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If yes, who were the identified users?</p> <p>Comments.</p> <p>If yes, what was the planned use?</p> <p>Comments.</p> <p>How did users participate? (e.g., identifying questions, respondents, data collection, analysis, dissemination, etc.) Comments.</p>	<p>2.1 Were the evaluation issues/questions identified?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2.2 Given what could have been done in the evaluation, was the design of the evaluation adequate to address those issues/questions? (e.g. resources allotted, timing, perspectives represented, information sources consulted)</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Insufficient detail to assess <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>What were the evaluation issues?</p> <p>Comments.</p> <p>If no, in what way was the design inadequate?</p> <p>Comments.</p>
3. ACCURACY		4. PROPRIETY	
<p>3.1 Given what was actually done in the evaluation, did the evaluation use appropriate tools and methods?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Insufficient detail to assess <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3.2 Did it apply the tools and methods well?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Insufficient detail to assess <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3.3 Is the evidence presented in the report?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3.4. Overall, does the evidence substantiate the conclusions/ recommendations?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If no, in what ways were the tools and methods inappropriate?</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>If no, how ere they poorly applied?</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>Comments</p>	<p>4.1 Was there an expressed intent to enhance the evaluative capacity of <i>the user(s) of the evaluation</i> as a result of this evaluation?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>4.2 Was there an expressed intent to enhance the evaluative capacity of <i>those being evaluated</i> as a result of this evaluation?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>4.3 Did any of the content of the evaluation report raise ethical concerns?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>What was the intent? What was the result?</p> <p>Comments.</p> <p>What was the intent? What was the result?</p> <p>Comments.</p> <p>If yes, what are those concerns?</p> <p>Comments.</p>

Annex 6 Evaluation Guidelines and Highlights

Guidelines

The Evaluation Unit produces Guidelines in order to assist staff in the design and development of evaluation studies. These are developed on key aspects of evaluation and evaluation planning and are revised over time as conditions change. New guidelines are added as the need emerges. The following ten guidelines have been distributed to all staff and are available on-line at: (http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-32492-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

1. Searching for Evaluation Reports
2. Evaluation Planning in Program Initiatives
3. Formatting Evaluation Reports at IDRC
4. Quality Assessment of IDRC Evaluation Reports
5. Writing Terms of Reference (ToRs) for an Evaluation
6. Identifying the Intended Use(s) of an Evaluation
7. Identifying the Intended User(s) of an Evaluation
8. Selecting and Managing an Evaluation Consultant or Team
9. Preparing Program Objectives

Highlights

The Evaluation Unit produces Highlights on issues of general interest to the Centre. Highlights may be the summary of results of an investigation into an issue in evaluation – such as the problem of attribution – or they may highlight findings of a strategic evaluation or findings that cut across a number of evaluations. As Highlights are produced they are circulated to staff and posted to our public site at: (http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-61944-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

1. Addressing the Question of Attribution in Evaluation
2. The Corporate Assessment Framework
3. The Sustainability of IDRC-Supported Networks
4. The Intended Results of IDRC's Support of Networks: Extension, Excellence, Action, and Autonomy
5. Capacities, Context, Conditions: The Influence of IDRC- Supported Research on Policy Processes
6. Deepening a Culture of Reflection: IDRC's Rolling Project Completion Report Process
7. A Contemplative Recess: IDRC's Annual Learning Forum (ALF)
8. Competitive Grant Projects at IDRC
9. The Influence of Monitoring and Evaluation in Swayamsiddha
10. Capacity Building Strategic Evaluation
11. IDRC and Research Networks: Allies for Development
12. IDRC's Approach to Evaluation*
13. Capacity Building Typology*

* Indicates new highlight for this year

Annex 7 Management Response

The Senior Management Committee has reviewed the Annual Corporate Evaluation Report (ACE) 2007. The report reminds us of the importance of the Centre maintaining an evaluation system that includes elements of independence and covers a wide range of IDRC's spending. The report provides a useful estimate on total Centre spending on evaluation; in addition one element of the system, the Project Completion Reports, is based on staff time rather than expenditure on external consultants.

In terms of the essential building blocks of the Centre evaluation system, the Report notes that the number of rolling Project Completion Reports (rPCRs) completed indicates a very positive trend upward, and that this report presents the lowest number of later rPCRs to date. We agree that this illustrates the importance that has been attached to this activity across the Centre. The report also gives an example of using rPCRs to accumulate findings on strengthening organizational capacity; they were also a main resource used by Directors of Program Areas in preparing their reports to the Board. We feel that some caution is required in carrying out quantitative analysis to sum up findings from rPCRs – in this case on IDRC's achievements of project objectives. We will follow up with staff to ensure more systematic reporting of reasons for partial or non-fulfilment of project objectives, and will review the need to improve objective formulation and data on project monitoring.

As in past years, the Report notes that the overall quality of evaluations is mixed. The improvement compared to the period 2002-2005 (CSPFIII) has been maintained, but the Report continues to suggest "the need for an ongoing campaign to improve evaluation quality". We note that it is still not clear how these numbers compare with assessments of the evaluation reports of other agencies.

We note the progress being made on the important Strategic Evaluation of capacity development, and that care has been taken – in consultation with Centre staff and partners – to derive a typology to assess achievements in capacity building. This is a study in which the Centre has invested considerably. We will await with interest the results and synthesis of the cases studies which are the main feature of the next phase of this work.

Overall, we endorse the report, and look forward to receiving Governors' views on it.